

Message Text

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ACTION SSM-05

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 SS-15 IO-13 INR-07 L-03
OC-06 CCO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 ACDA-07 NSC-05 DODE-00
EUR-12 AF-10 /099 W
-----190241Z 061510 /72
R 181245Z MAY 77
FM USMISSION SINAI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2655

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FOR SSM

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, EG, IS, UN

SUBJECT: BEDOUIN SNIPING INCIDENT AND CAMEL SITUATION IN SFM AREA

1. THE NUMBER OF BEDOUIN AND CAMELS IN EARLY WARNING SYSTEM AREA HAS RISEN SHARPLY IN RECENT WEEKS, TO THE POINT THAT WE ARE EXPERIENCING THE LARGEST CONCENTRATION OF CAMELS HERE SINCE THE MISSION BEGAN ITS OPERATION. THERE ARE AT LEAST 57 CAMELS PRESENTLY ACCOUNTED FOR.

2. NEITHER THE UN NOR THE IDF APPEAR TO BE MAKING A SERIOUS EFFORT TO KEEP THE ANIMALS OUT. AS A RESULT, THEY ARE COMING FROM THREE DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS: SOUTH FROM BALUZA, WEST FROM IDF TERRITORY EAST OF THE GIDDI PASS, AND NORTHWEST FROM IDF TERRITORY SOUTH OF THE MITLA PASS.

3. THE CAMELS HAVE PROBABLY BEEN ATTRACTED BY THE RELATIVELY GREEN SHRUBBERY STILL EVIDENT IN OUR AREA. SOME BEDOUINS HAVE ENTERED BUFFER ZONE (BZ) WITH CAMELS TO WATCH THEM AND SOME TO RETRIEVE THEM.

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4. MAJOR MALLINKRODT, THE UN'S BEDOUIN EXPERT, HAS SEEN NUMEROUS SIGNS (FRESH FOOTPRINTS, ETC.) OF RECENT BEDOUIN TRAVEL IN OUR AREA. LAST WEEK, ONE SHOT TWICE AT HIS CAMPSITE AFTER HE HAD ROUNDED UP 10 CAMELS.

5. THE INCIDENT, WHICH TOOK PLACE ON MAY 10, OCCURRED WHILE

MALLINKRODT AND HIS BEDOUIN HELPER WERE PREPARING DINNER AROUND THEIR FIRE AFTER THEY HAD COLLECTED THE CAMELS AT THE 8.5 KILO-METER POINT (MEASURED FROM MITLA WEST) ON THE MITLA ROAD. A BEDOUIN STANDING ON A RIDGE ABOUT 200 METERS AWAY FIRED TWO SHOTS, WHICH HIT ABOUT 10 METERS FROM THEIR FIRE. HE THEN SHOUTED IN ARABIC: "I AM FROM BALUZA. FREE THE ANIMALS AND GO AWAY." BEFORE MALLINKRODT COULD STOP HIS BEDOUIN ASSISTANT, THE LATTER HAD CUT 9 OF THE 10 ANIMALS FREE.

6. AT THIS POINT, MALLINKRODT RADIOED A MAYDAY DISTRESS CALL. TWO UNMO'S, ONE FROM CP BRAVO AND THE OTHER FROM CP CHARLIE, ARRIVED ABOUT 15 MINUTES LATER. THEY HAD COME SLIGHTLY OVER 30 KMS, NEARLY HALF OF THE DISTANCE BY WAY OF A DIRT ROAD. A GHANAIAAN DETACHMENT FROM THE GHANBATT HQS, 8.5 KMS AWAY BY ASPHALT ROAD, TOOK TWO HOURS REPEAT TWO HOURS TO REACH HIM. MALLINKRODT FOUND SPENT CARTRIDGES ON THE RIDGE WHICH INDICATED THAT THE BEDOUIN SNIPER HAD FIRED AN ISRAELI-MADE 9 MM WEAPON.

7. THE NEXT DAY, MAY 11, MALLINKRODT TOOK HIS ONE REMAINING CAMEL TO ROMANI WHERE HE CALLED ON THE EGYPTIAN CIVIL ADMINISTRATOR (A BRIGADIER). THE LATTER VEHEMENTLY DENIED THAT THE CAMEL HAD COME FROM ANY BEDOUIN TRIBE UNDER ARAB CONTROL. MALLINKRODT THEN TOOK THE CAMEL TO EL-KIRBAH (UN POSITION 567) WHERE HE LEFT IT WITH THE IDF LO FOR FURTHER IDENTIFICATION. RETURNING THE NEXT DAY (MAY 12), THE IDF INFORMED HIM THAT THE CAMEL HAD COME FROM THE BALUZA AREA, FROM THE EL-HOWAR TRIBE. THE IDF TURNED THE CAMEL OVER TO A NEARBY BEDOUIN WHO WAS TO RETURN IT TO ITS OWNERS.

8. WHEN MALLINKRODT RETURNED TO ROMANI THE SAME DAY AND TOLD LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE CIVIL ADMINISTRATOR THAT THE CAMEL HAD INDEED COME FROM HIS AREA, THE LATTER GOT VERY ANGRY, DENIED THE CHARGE AND TOLD MALLINKRODT THAT HE WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO GET ANY MORE BEDOUIN FROM THE BUFFER ZONE TRIBES TO HELP HIM.

9. MALLINKRODT RETURNED TO THE SFM AREA YESTERDAY (MAY 17) WITH A BEDOUIN FROM HIS UN CAMP. MALLINKRODT AND HIS ASSISTANT TOOK A DETACHMENT OF GHANAIAAN SOLDIERS AND TWO FINNISH SOLDIERS WITH THEM AND ROUNDED UP 16 CAMELS. BY THEIR MARKINGS, ALL APPEAR TO HAVE COME FROM ISRAELI TERRITORY EAST OF THE GIDDI PASS.

10. MALLINKRODT SAYS THAT APPROXIMATELY 30 CAMELS REMAIN IN THE AREA APPROX 20 KM EAST OF MITLA WEST ON THE MITLA PASS ROAD. HE SAYS THAT THEY ARE FROM THE NORTHERN BZ, AND HE BELIEVES THAT THEIR OWNER IS STILL WITH THEM. SFM PERSONNEL ALSO SPOTTED 11 CAMELS YESTERDAY NEAR WEST SIDE E-1 MOVING WEST. MALLINKRODT INTENDS TO ROUND UP BOTH GROUPS OF CAMELS TODAY (MAY 18).

11. MALLINKRODT WHO HAS BEEN ESPECIALLY HELPFUL TO THE SFM IN

THIS PROBLEM, EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT BEDOUIN, ANGRY THAT THEIR CAMELS HAD BEEN ROUNDED UP, MIGHT SHOOT AT SFM PERSONNEL OR BUILDINGS IN RETALIATION. HE NOTED, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT THEY MIGHT HAVE CACHES OF MODERN ARMS (INCLUDING RPG'S) STASHED IN THIS AREA. HE IS PARTICULARLY DUBIOUS ABOUT GHANBATT'S ABILITY TO PROTECT US, AND SUGGESTS INSTEAD MOBILE PATROLS OF UNMO'S.

12. UNEF HQ, FOR ITS PART, CONTINUES TO TREAT THE SFM CAMEL PROBLEMS WITH A CERTAIN DEGREE OF HILARITY. GENERAL SIILASVUO WILL BE VISITING ME HERE AT THE BASE CAMP TODAY AND I INTEND TO RAISE THIS ISSUE WITH HIM DIRECTLY.

13. INTERNAL SECURITY PATROLS AND MONITORING OF PHYSICAL SECURITY SYSTEM HAVE BEEN TIGHTENED UP. USE OF ROAD BETWEEN MITLA EAST AND MITLA WEST HAS BEEN SUSPENDED UNTIL ROUNDUP COMPLETED.

14. WILL ADVISE RESULTS OF TALK WITH GENERAL SIILASVUO. THORNE
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